

November 20, 2008  
276 Fourth Avenue

Guests: Steve Alanis, 2934 Degen Dr. Bonita, CA 91902

- Decrement list was developed for the department;
- Core-services were prioritized throughout the department and city-wide;
- The Department continues to meet community recreational, health and wellness needs;
- Supplies and Services from the budget have been diminished considerably throughout the department and city-wide;

- 80% of city-budget is payroll;
- Everything that the Recreation Department does from this point related to reductions is cutting into reducing service levels and reducing opportunities for revenue.
- The Department is faced with the next-round of additional cuts of eliminating another \$500K worth of part-time staff;
- The Department is currently faced with closing the Chula Vista Nature Center;
- The Nature Center is a very important facility because it's a health and wellness venue for the community; however, it doesn't produce the revenue that is required to keep it open;
- As far as core-services are concerned and prioritizing core-services for the City, the Nature Center is not at the top of the list;
- The bargaining units in the city don't feel that this facility is a core-service facility, and discussed that "feeding birds and animals" is not a priority when employees are at the brink of being let go from employment; In addition, they feel that the facility is costly to keep open; and feel this is not a core-service facility;
- On December 4<sup>th</sup> the Department will inform Council how the department prioritized its core-services;
- It is the goal of the Department to continue operating the Nature Center, but will have to figure out how to operate it differently;
- The Department's budget-cuts are 23% of the current budget;
- During the last budget-cut process, the department's budget was cut by 16%;
- The City Council was briefed on Monday, November 17 by SanDag and County of S.D Assessor's Office;
- The City Council also received a Financial Status Update on October 21, 2008 from Office of Budget and Analysis and the Finance Director; the employees were also given this financial status
- Buck briefly discussed the Financial Status presentation of October 21<sup>st</sup>, which includes: 8% reserve (council policy); Sales Tax Comparison 08 vs. 07; State Budget Takeaways; FY 08-09 Projected Budgetary Gap of \$6.3 million dollars; Update to FY 09-10 forecast budgetary gap is \$19.1 million dollars;
- As of November 19, the FY 09-10 budgetary gap had increased to \$20 million dollars because of the reassessment of property values;
- Mr. Griffin (Director of Public Works) also noted that the Assessors Office projected a 2% reduction in reassessed property values; discussion held on property values that have dropped; Prop 13, etc.;
- Mr. Griffin noted that the SR-125 has helped a bit in tax revenue;
- There are currently 44 vacant positions in the City;
- How is the City going to correct the budget short-falls/discrepancies? Mr. Martin noted that changes in services will take place;
- Variable in the budget is dependent on the bargaining-units and the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City and the different bargaining units;
- If pay-increases go forth as stated in the MOUs then this would be detrimental to the City and its employees because lay-offs will be imminent in addition to reduced services;

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- If pay-increases are not paid-out, then the lay-offs won't be as deep;
  - Mid-managers, Senior managers and executives are already aware that they won't be receiving a Cost-of-Living increase;
  - As of the morning of November 20<sup>th</sup>, it was announced that higher level of budget cuts were required;
  - The Department eliminated the Adult Athletics Coordinator and eliminated a level of Senior Management;
  - The Department is now faced, as stated before, eliminating the Nature Center (\$8.5 Million);
  - The next items on the list of elimination from the budget is Therapeutics (Adaptive Sports/Inclusionary); Middle Schools Program and Mobile Recreation Program (hopefully the YMCA can take the MS program) and closing Parkway Pool;
  - By closing Parkway Pool; supervisory staff would be consolidated and integrated with Loam Verde Pool, with the lowest ranking Pool Manager being let go;
  - The next item on the budget cut-list is closing Parkway Gym and reducing hours of operation Parkway Center. Parkway Gym has been open for 54-years;
  - Parkway facility was chosen because of core-services, revenue generation and funding other department programs; Parkway Pool produces more revenue (this is due to the Pool Manager); however PW Pool is smaller;
  - Both pools have been refurbished recently over the past couple of years and the net cost of keeping PW Pool open is \$90K per fiscal year (after revenue);
  - Cost of keeping Nature Center open per fiscal year is \$677K; legal liability is currently being researched by the City Attorney's office (due to grants received);
  - There is a potential for additional administrative cuts in the Recreation Department (in management);
  - Parkway Recreation Gym cost \$70K and Pool is \$90K;
  - Mr. Griffin noted that these items would be presented to the City Council at the Budget Workshop of December 4<sup>th</sup> and encouraged the commission to attend;
  - Mr. Martin noted that there are no easy choices with the budget cuts being presented and falls on the shoulders of future pay-increases scheduled in '2009 and '2010;
  - Public Safety takes up 2/3 of city budget;
  - Participation from the public is greatly needed to ascertain services needed;
  - Revenues generated by the Nature Center are through admissions, bookstore, and educational services (CVESD). Total funds received for the Nature Center is \$300K (Port of SD, Fish & Wildlife, etc.).
  - Children from the Chula Vista Elementary School District participate in the science educational component that is taught at the Nature Center (a science teacher from the school district is on-site for this program);
  - Shifting the animals from the Nature Center to other facilities would also be costly;
  - Mr. Griffin noted that he hasn't talked individually with staff due to Civil Service Guidelines about who exactly would be laid-off and bumped out of a position as a result of department budget cuts;

- Park Ranger program is on the budget cut-list which means that those people that rent picnic shelters would be responsible for posting their own reservation sign;
- Mr. Griffin also informed the Commission that during these budget times, it would be difficult to justify keeping part-time staff and letting-go full-time staff;
- As a result of budget cuts the Strategic Plan for Public Works that is in place will no longer be a viable document as staffing and services offered are no longer available;
- Mr. Griffin explained that during the budget process, all vacant positions are terminated first from the budget;
- Mr. Griffin noted that the goal of the City was to inform affected staff by January 2009 with a lay-off date of either March 1<sup>st</sup> or April 1<sup>st</sup>;
- Mr. Griffin also noted that the City is considering another “early-retirement” which would save a lot of layoffs. Also noted is that positions being cut from the Public Works budget are positions that he would never consider deleting from the budget;

Commissioner Vogel asked about budget cuts made within the last two years besides the cuts being proposed to the Parkway Facility (affecting that immediate community).

Mr. Martin (Director of Recreation & Nature Center) responded that the immediate community is considered a two-mile radius of the facility. The Chula Vista Youth Center located on L Street was closed the last budget process, in addition, to reducing part-time hourly budget to about \$1.3 million dollars and with the retirement of 3 staff. Mr. Martin further noted that hours of operation have been reduced at all recreation facilities. Mr. Martin also added that the Recreation Department has to be managed similar to a business and identify which facilities brings-in the revenue which keeps programs going.

Commissioner Scott noted that she would be willing to talk with Mr. Martin with regards to writing/submitting a grant for the Nature Center to promote health and wellness (visiting this facility brings down the stress level of its visitors).

Commissioner Cien-Mayer noted that one of the saddest things is that many Chula Vista residents are unaware that the Nature Center exists.

Commissioner Garza inquired about the animals at the Nature Center and what happens to them if the Nature Center is closed down.

Mr. Martin responded that the animals would be relocated to other facilities which would be costly and those animals that could not be relocated would have to be euthanized.

**4. Unfinished Business – None**

**5. New Business – None**

**6. Written Communications – None****7. Commission Comments**

Commissioner Vogel noted that the SDG&E Park has no restrooms for park users and girls soccer leagues, and also inquired about the status of the concern that was raised by the visitor that attended the last commission meeting (regarding Friendship Park).

Mr. Martin responded that is very costly to build a restroom at a park. With regards to the Friendship Park inquiry; the visitor was put in contact with the Police Department and they were able to assist him. Mr. Martin also noted that the division in the police department that handles situations in parks, etc. could be deleted from the budget.

Commissioner Vogel inquired about calls placed to the Police Department regarding park disturbances.

Mr. Martin stated that he would follow-up with the Police Department and would provide information at the next meeting.

Commissioner Garza inquired about the on-line field information.

Mr. Griffin responded that staff is currently working on developing that information.

**8. Staff Comments –**

- a. Recreation Monthly Report (Buck Martin) – Mr. Martin reviewed the department's monthly report.
- b. Public Works (Jack Griffin) - None

**9. Public Comments****10. Other**

**Meeting Adjournment to the regularly scheduled meeting of January 15, 2009**